

SIGNS OF DEHYDRATION

Diarrhoea or Loose/Frequent Bowel Motions

Bowel surgery and chemotherapy can cause problems with very frequent and loose bowel motions. As a result of this you can become dehydrated very quickly.

To Prevent Dehydration

- Drink 8-10 cups of water a day.
- If you have a stoma, please add 2 teaspoons of salt to your diet a day.
- Avoid caffeine drinks, like tea and coffee, and alcohol.

Signs of Dehydration

- Large amounts of diarrhoea
- Large amounts of watery output from your stoma.
- Nausea or vomiting.
- Headache
- Feeling faint
- Loss of concentration
- Decreased amounts of dark urine.

If Dehydration Occurs

- Increase your fluid intake (you can use Gastrolyte or electrolyte drinks).
- If prescribed medication for nausea or vomiting, take as directed.
- If prescribed Loperamide, take only as directed.
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If you feel worse or symptoms persist for more than 24 hours you must seek urgent medical advice.

Medications to Control your Loose/Frequent Bowel Motions

Loperamide, Diastop, Nordia

- If you have been prescribed loperamide it may be difficult to predict exactly how much you may need.
- Once you take this medication it may take it about half an hour to work and the length of time it lasts for varies from person to person.
- Start by taking 1-2 tablets in the morning.
- If you are having problems later in the day or you are concerned that you may have problems when you go out, you may require a further 1-2 tablets at a time.
- You can increase the loperamide up to 8 tablets a day so long as you do not take more than one tablet at a time. **Please do not exceed this dose.**
- The most likely side effect of loperamide is that it may cause some degree of constipation or bloating, so you will need to adjust the number of tablets you take depending on the effect it has.

Metamucil, Mucilax, Psyllium

- Metamucil is a natural fibre and comes in a powder form.
- **For the treatment of loose motions do not take as directed on the packet.**
- Take one heaped teaspoon in a small amount of orange juice, or sprinkle on cereal or milk, or mix with jam before spreading on toast.
- Take once a day to help bulk up you motions.

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